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RECENT HISTORICAL LITERATURE

Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im Königreich Aragonien während des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts. Von Dr. FRITZ BAER. Berlin : Verlag von EMIL EBERING, 1913. pp. 212.

DR. BAER'S Studies make a noteworthy contribution to the important series of *Historische Studien* under the general editorship of the veteran historian Emil Ebering, of which series Dr. Baer's book forms volume 106. Among Jewish historical studies, Dr. Baer's book will rank as an able presentation of the constitutional development of an important section of Mediaeval Jewry. It is the special merit of Dr. Baer's work, moreover, that he has utilized with unprecedented thoroughness the invaluable archive material of Jacobs, and Régné (up to the date of Baer's publication), the important researches of local Spanish historians, and has made extensive use of the rabbinic responsa.

Dividing his book into two sections of unequal length, the author defines in the one part the legal status of the Jews in Aragon, and in the other their economic position (*wirtschaftliche Lage*). The social life proper does not fall within the scope of the present work. The first division, to which two-thirds of the text are devoted, is divided into three comprehensive chapters: the Jews and the public powers, i. e. the king, the feudal lords, the towns, and the Church: the legal relations between the Jews and their Christian fellow-citizens, which might more properly have been entitled, the personal rights of the Jews and their legal relations with their Christian neighbours: and finally, the composition and administration of the Jewish communities. The second division consists of two chapters: the size and material development of the Jewish communities in the kingdom of Aragon: and the economic occupations of the Jews. This part contains

important statistical data, but is not so adequately treated as the first division of the book. It is followed by an excursus on the rôle of the Jews in the fiscal administration of the Aragon States in the thirteenth century, and an appendix which in the manner of Hoffmann's *Geldhandel der deutschen Juden* contains representative selections from the rabbinic responsa.

The exposition of the legal status is in the main well conceived. The status of the Jews in Spain was but their status in Mediaeval Christendom—a misfit by-product of Christian theory and the feudal order. The legal theory prevailed generally in the European countries that the Jews were everywhere aliens, being without a *natural* right to the territory which they inhabited, and automatically falling to the possession of the king as soon as they set foot on his soil. Like the Saracens, the Spanish Jews belonged to the *Patrimonio Real*, and as earlier in the pseudo-Roman Empire, so in Spain in the fourteenth century they were called specifically *servi camerae*.

Though Baer urges caution against the sweeping theories of the Mediaeval Codes, and explains that in no literal sense could the Jews be described as the king's chattel, he overemphasizes nevertheless the legal attachment of the Jews to the king and their alleged inability under the penalty of loss of life and property to leave the king's dominion without a special royal authorization. The Jews being a source of revenue, it was natural for the king to look with favour upon Jewish immigration and to frown upon their emigration, and indeed James I and his successors distinctly forbade the latter. But the prohibition seems to have been primarily directed against the acquisition of Jews by his feudal vassals rather than to fix upon the Jews a status akin to serfdom. That it was not an effective check on Jewish emigration is decisively shown in the responsa where the Jewish population appears essentially mobile. Nor is the evidence which Baer collected (p. 14, n. 10) sufficiently imposing to warrant his important generalization. Between Régné 94, 95, 574, and Jacobs 1038, 1044 there is a gap of approximately sixty years, and the latter seem to imply a new decree. In the former, the emigrants were

plainly creditors, who therefore *in absentia* were still conducting gainful enterprise in their native town and thus had not entirely severed connexion with their former domicile. Barfat I, 2 states openly that the confiscation of the property of emigrants as newly decreed, that it was illegal extortion, and that it was consequently permitted to evade the law. To this may be added Ibn Adret, *Responsa*, V, 198, where the French authorities are quoted approvingly that 'Jews are like knights' and therefore have the right to change their domicile. (Cf. Tosafot, Baba ḥamma 58 a). Finally, it should be emphasized that within the crown-lands, the Jews enjoyed full freedom of movement.

The motives that determined the Jewish policies of the Aragon kings are grouped by Baer under three headings: the demands of the Catholic Church, the interests of the Christian subjects, and the increase of the royal budget. Without exception, the Spanish kings of the period under consideration showed but little inclination to obey the behests of canon law and papal exhortations against the Jews. But their personal piety and Christian zeal strongly favoured a legislative policy looking toward the conversion of the Jews through compulsory disputations, enforced Church attendance, and even the instrument of the Inquisition, when the latter did not invade their seignorial rights. The interests of the Christian subjects, on the other hand, figure but slightly as a conscious factor in the king's attitude to the Jews. Indeed, the laws against usury which Baer attributes to this motive were originally granted as a concession to the Church rather than the people (cf. Régéné, 5). Baer fails to interpret the king's apparent unconcern about the general welfare of his Christian subjects as being in reality a significant recognition of the beneficial character of the economic activities of the Jews. Both the religious as well as the national considerations, however, were but contributory causes to the prime purpose by which the kings were guided in all their relations to the Jews, the royal revenue.

In this graduated scheme of royal motives, it will be noted, the interests of the Jews *per se* play no part. Their profit and increase were but the king's gain, and were thus encouraged by him

from a motive of self-interest. The validity of the latter interpretation in general is indisputable, and, it may be added, no one realized its significance more than the Jews themselves. But as even mediaeval kings were prone to human inconsistency, their acts were often promoted by higher motives, which too receive full recognition in the Jewish sources. Moreover, the sway of the Jewish court-favourites and high officials in Spain was such that their influence upon the king might indeed have been accounted as an independent factor in shaping the Jewish policies of the Spanish Crown. Evidently, however, Baer shares the usual tendency to regard the political life of the mediaeval Jews as entirely passive. Plausible as this view may appear, it reveals only a half-truth. It ignores completely the reaction of the Jews, which was of high practical and theoretical importance. For though in the last resort the Jews had no voice in framing the laws which affected their political, economic, and religious condition, they subjected every decree of the king and curia to their own standards of justice and equity, and to their own conceptions of political theory. The judicial opinions of the rabbis presume to define the rights of the sovereign, the nation, and the Jews (Ibn Adret II, 134, V, 4, VI, 149). In numerous cases they pass adversely upon the legality of the king's decrees. They limit his right of confiscation (Barfat, II, 9). They champion the Jews' unrestricted right of travel and emigration (Ibn Adret, V, 198; Barfat, I, 2, II, 9). They uphold the property rights of marranos who fled to do penance (Barfat, I, 2). These judicial decisions did not of course contemplate open resistance; but they did sanction and accomplish the evasion and secret defeat of such measures as were not based on justice or established prerogative. Always based on rabbinic law and precedent, they represent not merely the theoretical interest of legalists, but reflect the historical view-point of mediaeval Jewry, which has too long and uniformly been neglected in our expositions of Jewish history.

Dr. Baer has therefore unhappily missed the opportunity, which his knowledge of the responsa amply afforded, of treating his subject from a fresh angle. Nowhere is this shortcoming so

apparent as in the description of the inner administration of the Jewish communities. In this exposition, the basis of the communal organization rests solely on the bewildering series of detailed regulations which were issued by the kings relating to the individual aljamas. To the Jews who lived under these statutes, however, the laws appeared only as the external authorization of the king, as the limitation rather than the sanction of Jewish communal government. Thus in a trenchant review of the laws which governed the election of communal officers in Barcelona and which were based on an edict of the king as well as a communal statute, R. Isaac Barfat stated clearly: 'There is no doubt but that without the confirmation of our lord the King, high be his glory, the Aljama has the authority in accordance with the law of our Torah to frame its own ordinances, and to ban, excommunicate, and penalize the offenders of its statutes But because the fear of the King was upon them, lest the rulers say, Ye have usurped your authority without the consent of the King, and also in order to overawe would-be offenders with the dread of the sovereign, they solicited the decree from the lord our King, high be his glory (Barfat, I, 228). Whatever the resemblance between the communal government of the Jews and the municipal administration of the mediaeval city, it was from the mass of rabbinic law that the Jews drew their fundamental principles of representative government. In the terms of halakah, they defined the legislative authority of the majority, and by its standards they upheld as well the inalienable rights of the minority. (Ibn Adret, I, 729, III, 392, V, 126, 277-8; 178). The relation of a major community to its subordinate aljamas in a governmental province (*Ibid.*, III, 411), the autonomy of political or economic parties within the larger Kahal (*Ibid.*, IV, 185), the attempted secession of individuals or parties from the corporate body (*Ibid.*, I, 769, V, 277), the validity, or constitutionality of statutes touching the religious, economic, and political life of the members of the community were all studied and treated in the light of rabbinic law. Thus, for instance, it is impossible to understand the problem of legislative readjustment which constantly faced the

Jewish communities without a knowledge of the halakah of the vow and the ban, and the regulations governing their recall. To treat the Bet-din solely as a subordinate appendage of the governing Council (Baer, p. 107) and to dispose of the function of the Rabbi in the mediaeval community in twenty-two lines of text (pp. 117-18) is virtually to throw out of gear the centre of legal authority and moral sanction among the Jews in the Middle Ages.

The merit of Dr. Baer's sketch of the Jewish communal organization lies chiefly in the skill with which he has sifted and identified the loose Hebrew titles of the higher communal officials. The organized life of mediaeval Jewry created new functions without coining a correspondingly new terminology. Old terms were taken, it would appear, almost at random, and were applied in a loose fashion to designate new offices. The result was, to say the least, confusing. Thus the term **ברורים** refers alternately to the Governing Council, the Supervisors of Taxes, the Committee on Religious and Moral Observance, and the Court, or Bet-din. The connotation of **נאמנים** in Eastern Catalonia differed from its meaning in Western Catalonia; and so, other examples of ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning may easily be added. Out of this confusion, Baer was no doubt helped in part by the Latin and Spanish equivalents of the Hebrew terms, which occur in the non-Hebrew sources, which he has sifted with technical skill, and he thus helped to restore a fair picture of the official family of the Jewish communal organization. Nevertheless, his identifications are not always warranted. Thus, the **ברורי עברות** who supervised the moral and religious discipline in the community, it is to be assumed, formed an independent body like the tax-officials, and are not to be identified with the general Board of Mukdamim or Neemanim merely because the latter officials also at times performed similar functions *in other communities*. Nor is there sufficient warrant for treating the Aljama of Catalonia as a distinct type different from the community of Aragon or Valencia, because the one was headed by a board called Neemanim and the other by the Mukdamim, as the functions of the two bodies were completely identical despite their difference in name. Indeed,

even in Castile which was an independent kingdom and was ruled by a different dynasty, the development of the Jewish communal organization was sufficiently similar to that of the joint monarchy of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia to justify the use of the common national term, the Spanish *Aljama*.—Incidentally it may be remarked that Baer's statement, which is based on Amador de los Rios, that in Castile Jews were forbidden to acquire land at the end of the thirteenth century, &c., ought to be corrected in view of the contradictory evidence of the responsa of R. Asher and his son R. Judah. Divisions 95-99 in R. Asher's responsa refer primarily to cases of landed property.

In general, it is true that the Jews usually lived apart from the general population, but it cannot be made a rule that in *every* city (Baer, p. 88) the Jews lived in a separate quarter. (Cf. Ibn Adret, I, 1129). Ibn Adret, V, 222 does not sustain Baer in the conclusion that the entire male population from the age of fifteen upwards participated in the communal assemblies. The responsum states merely that the ban against the evasion of tax-duties was to be pronounced in the Synagogue in the presence of all males from the age of fifteen upward, i. e. all male persons liable to taxes. Baer's unsupported assertion (p. 18) that the Jews unlike the Saracens were free from the poll-tax, stands in strange contradiction to Ibn Adret, V, 178, IV, 64-5. Baer assumes that in the *aljamas* the bakers like the butchers had to be Jews because of ritual observances. He has apparently overlooked the remark of an eye-witness, R. Menahem b. Zerah, that 'in most places whither we have been exiled there is no Jewish baker'. (*Zedah la-Derek*, p. 102 b, ed. Sabbioneta). As for Jewish butchers, see Ibn Adret, III, 253.

The selections from the responsa which end the *Studien* are well chosen. Altogether, Dr. Baer's volume is a notable contribution, which will be gratefully received by all students of Spanish-Jewish history.

Josephus. By NORMAN BENTWICH. Philadelphia: The JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA, 1914. pp. 266 + 3 photographic illustrations.

This volume on Josephus is the second contribution of Mr. Bentwich to the Biographical Series of Jewish Worthies, projected by the Jewish Publication Society of America. The time is not so distant when the embellished works of Josephus in Whiston's translation were assigned an honourable place by the side of the Bible in every pious household in England and America. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Josephus and his writings have been strangely neglected in English literature, scientific no less than popular, so that the Society by its recent publication has filled a long-felt desideratum, and the author has produced a work to which special interest is attached thereby. The book is primarily designed for Jewish readers, and the author's avowed aim was 'to consider Josephus from the Jewish point of view'.

The want of sympathy which Mr. Bentwich felt for his 'hero' happily did not detract from the pleasantness of his style. The presentation shows the writer's firm grasp of the intricate problems of his subject, and his exposition though largely argumentative is lucid and attractive. Of the nine chapters which compose the book, the first is very properly a *résumé* of the relations of Rome and Judea up to the great tragedy of tragedies: the second and third chapters give a critical account of Josephus, the soldier, and traitor to his country; the remainder of the volume is an appreciation—in my opinion, a depreciation—of the literary work of Josephus.

From the start, the writer adopts a sceptical attitude towards Josephus' self-representation, which leads him not only to question Josephus' boasted attainments in Jewish lore, but even to doubt the account of his early training under the Essene Banus. The same cavilling tendency the writer displays with more serious consequences in his estimation of Josephus' literary and historic merits. The stout claim of the author of the 'Wars' that the work was based on his own notes taken from personal observation

is confuted, and the suggestion is made that 'with Josephus it is true that "once a compiler, always a compiler"'.

With a few skilful touches, Mr. Bentwich depicts the history of Jewish historic writing in the Graeco-Roman period till the time of Josephus. The linking of the Occident and the Orient through the conquests of Alexander the Great broadened the sympathies and historic interests of the Greek. This affected powerfully the writing of Jewish history; for henceforth the Jews came within the ken of Greek encyclopedists and national historians, and Hellenized Jews were thereby stimulated to write their own history in order to supplement and oft-times to correct the libellous accounts of the heathen writers. Under these influences and under the inspiration of the Maccabees, a considerable historic literature sprang up, written in a didactic vein from the practical view-point of the apologist. This polemic character of all Jewish-Hellenistic writing, Mr. Bentwich describes with sufficient clearness and emphasis, and yet he might have taken this more fully into consideration in his caustic criticism of the inaccuracy and the colouring of Josephus' writings.

This Greek and Hellenistic literature, the greater part of which is known to us only through the liberal quotations of Josephus, the latter did not know at first hand, is the view adopted by Mr. Bentwich. The vast erudition which Josephus displays in all his works he culled artificially from a few collections of industrious compilers. 'His archaeology extended only to the reading of one or more writers of universal ancient history' (p. 142). Alexander Polyhystor and Nicholas of Damascus supplied him with the names of the Jewish and Greek authors and also with brief extracts from their works, referring to the Jews. Besides the books of these two authors, his literary apparatus for the twenty books of the *Antiquities* was limited to the Bible, the First Book of the Maccabees, minus the last two (three?) chapters, the lost chronicle of John Hyrcanus, Strabo's History, and perhaps several hypothetical chronicles of Jewish Hellenistic origin. These sources he slavishly incorporated in his works either verbatim or with slight paraphrasing, so that they awkwardly bear their original

earmarks. Even in matters of opinion, he copied the point of view of whatever guide he happened to follow, so that the reader is always uncertain as to whether he is confronted with the judgement of Jew, Greek, or Roman. This theory of Josephus' method of writing is applied in its extreme form to the 'Wars', in which not only is the point of view said to be borrowed from a Roman source, but the entire work is characterized as a compilation of the works of *unknown* predecessors to which Josephus added 'something from his personal experience and his national pride'.

The views advanced by Mr. Bentwich are not original with him, and it is not necessary to enter here into a critical examination of the individual opinions expressed by the author. Suffice it to say, that on the whole the exposition is in harmony with the conclusions of Destignon—though the latter's bold theory of the Anonymus is not entirely adopted—Niese, and in the Wars, most faithfully, Schlatter. While their conclusions by no means represent the consensus of scholarly opinion, and both Schürer and Juster place much greater credence and value on Josephus as an historian, nevertheless, Mr. Bentwich is of course entirely within the bounds of scholarly grace in following the trends of those scholars, whose contribution to the study of Josephus is unquestioned. Yet it is to be regretted that in a popular book which aims to introduce Josephus to the English readers, the literary and historic merits of Josephus should be thus belittled and minimized. The presentation is hardly calculated to stimulate the reader to a further study of Josephus' work.

Much less justifiable is Mr. Bentwich's subjective criticism of Josephus from the Jewish point of view. 'It is when tried by the test of faithfulness to his nation that Josephus is found most wanting', the author writes anticipatively in the preface. This verdict which is axiomatic of Josephus the General cannot however be assumed for Josephus the Apologist and Chronicler of his nation. No one will have the hardihood to vindicate the character of Josephus. His exaggerated egoism, his personal conceit, and, above all, his confessed betrayal of his country's cause are so glaringly exposed in his own writings that it may well be said that

Josephus was his own worst traducer. But it cannot be denied that at bottom he loved his religion and his race, and that though at one time he threw down his country's sword, he did not lack the courage later on to take up the literary cudgels against a host of his people's calumniators. It is unjust to deny to him the authorship of the finest passages in *Contra Apionem* simply because 'they are too eloquent and inspired to fit Josephus', and it is just as unwarranted to criticize the historian of the first century for not having written a social and religious history of his people according to the taste of a twentieth century writer. Nor is it always a sign of 'inward slavery in outward freedom' when Josephus writes with an eye to the interests of the public for which his writings were composed. His Roman proclivities and deliberate misrepresentation of the Zealots are rightly condemned as treasonable bias, but his exposition of Judaism in the terms of a Roman stoic does not indicate that he was 'incapable of presenting his people's history in its true light', but shows a desire which was shared by all writers of the Jewish-Hellenistic schools to render Judaism understood and respected by cultured heathens. That Josephus does not display the philosophic depth of Philo or the poetic instincts of the Bible or the fervent spirit of the Haggadist, has but little relevancy in the appraisal of a man who figures in the literary history of antiquity not as poet, philosopher or exegete, but as an historian of unusual industry, application, and erudition, to whom the world is under immense obligation for its better knowledge of the history and literature of the ancients, and who has been for the Jews not only spokesman and apologist in the heathen and Christian worlds, but also their foremost historian for nearly two millennia.

The volume is not free from inaccuracies that are almost unavoidable in a popular book, but the following correction in particular ought to be pointed out. The *אבן שתייה* in the Holy of Holies was the solemn 'Foundation Stone' on which the High-priest placed the censer in the Atonement service, which filled the innermost sanctuary with a cloud of incense: but *no blood of any sacrifice was sprinkled on it*. The suggestion that the mystery of

the 'Foundation Stone' so impressed the Greek scribes that they accounted it as the object of worship, and that then the ambiguous meaning of *onos* which signifies in Greek either stone or ass, gave rise to the charge of ass-worship against Jews and Christians loses thus much of its force. It might also be noted that according to Josephus' account, the Holy of Holies contained no objects whatsoever.¹ A more plausible explanation of the strange charge against the Jews and Christians that persisted for centuries is that of Simonsen who attributes it to a confusion between Jo, the papyri designation for the ass which was invoked by Egyptians in magic and in worship as the deity Seth, and Jah, the Hebrew abbreviation for the name of God.²

A brief index and a bibliography that will be helpful to elementary students close this interesting volume. The author of *The Jews under the Romans* in the 'Stories of the Nations Series' is W. D. Morrison, not Hosmer. The latter is the author of the general history, entitled *The Story of the Jews*.

Die Memoiren des Ascher Levy aus Reichshofen im Elsass (1598-1635). Herausgegeben, übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen versehen von Dr. M. GINSBURGER. Berlin: Verlegt bei LOUIS LAMM, 1913.

Mediaeval Hebrew literature was essentially impersonal. The Jews had either no leisure or no desire to record their personal experiences in autobiographies or even in hastily jotted memoirs. The little biographical knowledge which we possess of the great figures in Mediaeval Jewry, it is well known, is derived in the main from stray references in *Hakdamot*, or Introductions, Testaments, and other occasional passages. All the more significant are the memoirs of R. Asher Levi written in a crude

¹ *B. J.*, V, 5. 5.

² *Festschrift zu Hermann Cohens siebzigstem Geburtstage*: Judaica, p. 298.

style and hybrid diction, but depicting with unconscious success the humour and pathos of his life and surroundings, admitting the reader into the private recesses of family secrets and communal factions, allowing him to stand by as a silent auditor, as he recites before God the sins and temptations against which he has repeatedly struggled in vain.

Asher Levi was a person of no special distinction. He was a poor merchant, an unlucky speculator, a restless tutor, and wandering teacher. His education he received from a score of successive teachers in as many different cities. Born in poverty and raised in the ravaging days of the Thirty Years' War, his life was that of a typical Bahur, who braved hardship and danger in order to sit at the feet of a famous teacher, and who was ever restless, driven by an inner impetus from city to city 'to serve the great ones of the world and to draw water from the well of life'.

In the memoirs, his object was to record only the events which happened to him and his family. He refers several times to a second part which was more ambitious in scope and was presumably a contemporaneous history of the Thirty Years' War and its effects upon the Jews. This should very likely prove a valuable document if it would ever come to light. The published memoirs too, however, are of considerable historical interest. They contain much material that will interest family historians. For instance, it appears that Asher Levy himself was a nephew of an ancestor of Cef Levi the wealthy banker and second husband of the famous diarist Glückel von Hammel. Of wider significance is Asher's descent from Jacob ha-Levi of Landau 'who', according to Asher's genealogical table 'belonged to the noble Spanish emigrants', as this implies an infiltration of Spanish exiles into Germany, of which we have otherwise no evidence. Asher's teachers were among the famous rabbis of his time, and his references to them amplify and sometimes correct our previous information regarding these personages. The memoirs contain also items of political and economical interest, such as the life of the people in a besieged city, the brigandage of the highways, the fluctuations of the coinage, the shifting prices of

wheat, rye, barley, wine, and meat. R. Asher alludes to the Vincent Fettmilch episode, which, he explains, he does not have to narrate as a book has already been written on the subject. We learn for the first time of the flight of the Jews from Metz in 1618-19 and of the narrow escape of the Jewish community of Frankfort from a danger that is only vaguely hinted at. But the booklet will be found most valuable for its contribution to the *Kulturgeschichte* of the period. Thus the typical career of a Jewish student is unfolded step by step. He was six years old when his father 'began to teach him the right way' by initiating him into the Hebrew alphabet. He was not yet seven when he walked daily from his home to another village to receive instruction. When he was nine years old, he went to Metz to study Talmud. Shortly after his fourteenth birthday, he left his native country to repair to the famous seat of learning in Prague, and only sickness impelled him five years later to return to his parents after having studied in Prague, Frankfort, Bresnitz, Bisenz, Vienna, and Austerlitz, besides tutoring in as many places. In the course of the narrative, one gets a vivid realization of the pestilences and diseases that ravaged the country, as well as the robbers and brigands that infested the roads. He married at twenty-four a girl of fifteen, and 'as long as he lived, he never would forget the conduct of his father-in-law'. The latter futilely attempted to break off the match, possibly due to the discovery of a fatal addiction to play from which Asher could not free himself. Indeed, throughout his life he waged a bitter struggle against this evil inclination; he passionately implored the aid of Heaven and of his sainted parents; he hoped to redeem himself through tears, fasting, and the dispensing of charity; but, strange to say, Dr. Ginsburger elected to omit these deeply pathetic passages in his translation of the Hebrew text. Though Asher's fortunes were on the wane, his doors were wide open to the poor. The ideals that pervaded his home are best illustrated by the architectural plan of his house, which had three special features: a little chapel for study and worship, a baking room designed especially for Passover bread and Sabbath cakes, and finally a private bath-house,

which he found necessary 'on account of the beastly practice which prevailed among the Gentiles for men and women to bathe together, in which the Jews too have joined'.

The above citations will illustrate the wide range of interest of the text which was ably prepared, translated, and learnedly annotated by Dr. Ginsburger. It is to be regretted that the editor did not append a list of the family and geographical names in their Hebrew and German equivalents which would have added to the value of the work without entailing much additional effort on his part.

Extra-Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History. Translated and edited by Rev. SAMUEL A. B. MERCER, Ph.D. New York: LONGMANS, GREEN, & Co., 1913. pp. xv + 210.

One of the achievements of applied pedagogics in history has been the recent introduction of source-books in the historical teaching, conducted in the colleges and secondary schools. In nearly all branches of history, the traditional text-book is losing in importance as greater emphasis is placed upon the student's familiarizing himself with the original documents, even if only in translation. Dr. Mercer's *Extra-Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History* is the first collection of this kind covering the subject of ancient Jewish history, though Giles' *Heathen Records to the Jewish Scripture History* (1856) deserved at least a note of bibliographical reference.

The comparatively small volume of two hundred pages embraces a period of three thousand years, from the antiquities of Babylon to the Jewish Rebellion under Hadrian. The sources are divided into four main divisions: Cuneiform, Egyptian, Semitic, and Greek and Latin, chronological sequence being followed in each group. The selections were gathered from about seventy-five odd volumes, representing a widely scattered and often inaccessible literature. For the cuneiform sources, the author acknowledges in particular the translations of Winckler's *Keilinschriftliches Textbuch zum*

Alten Testament, and Rogers' *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, and for Egyptian material, Breasted's *Ancient Records*, though in all cases except when stated in the notes the author made his original translations adhering to as literal a form as possible. Dr. Mercer wisely made no attempt to include in his work historical selections from the Bible, Apocrypha, Pseudo-epigrapha, Josephus, Philo, and the New Testament, as this literature is readily accessible and could at best have been only inadequately represented in a limited source-book.

Dr. Mercer claims too much for his book, or he is too optimistic in his assurance that now the student of Hebrew and Jewish history has before him all the sources in convenient form. The author certainly cannot mean this literally. The present collection of extra-biblical sources might easily and with great profit have been at least doubled in contents and yet would have been far from a complete record of the literature which bears intimately upon Biblical history. Obviously, it is not only the records that bear the name of Palestine that belong to the study of ancient Hebrew history, but also much of Babylonian, Egyptian, and Assyrian source-material. The student would miss then in this collection—choosing the examples more or less at random—the famous inscription of Nabonidus describing his discovery of the Foundation-Stone of the Temple of the Sun in Sippar, which is fundamental in establishing Babylonian and hence Hebrew chronology. He might reasonably expect to find in such a collection the Shalmaneser fragment of the early life of Sargon which though possibly only a secondary source, is still ancient and important enough to be reproduced in such a volume by reason of its striking similarity to the story of Moses. Certainly a collection of sources of early Hebrew history is not complete without at least some extracts from the Code of Hammurabi. As to the later period of Greek and Latin sources it is but necessary to compare Dr. Mercer's collection with Th. Reinach's *Textes d'auteurs grecs et romains relatifs au judaïsme* to observe how much the former lacks in completeness. Nevertheless, the present collection will be of great use to teachers who can refer students conveniently

to this book for such documents as the Black Obelisk, the 'Israel Stella', the Moabite Stone, &c., and Dr. Mercer has rendered an act of service for which he merits the gratitude of teachers of Hebrew history.

The most serious stricture that may be made against this book is its dogmatic fixation of remote dates without the slightest indication of their uncertainty. In a subject where a thousand years are but as yesterday it only bewilders the student to be equipped with a series of dates which he will not find duplicated in the next book of reference to which he is bound to turn. Even in this one book, he will find it hard to reconcile the dating of Naram-Sin at 2,600 B.C.E., in one passage, with the later statement of the record of Nabonidus which seems to show, unless the calculation of the scribes be wrong, that Naram-Sin reigned 3,200 years before his (Nabonidus') time. The chapter on Chronological Matter, too, is not sufficiently explanatory to enable the student to construct Biblical Chronology for himself.

Jewish History and Literature under the Maccabees and Herod.

By B. H. ALFORD. London and New York: LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 1913. pp. xvi + 113.

Mr. Alford, the author of *Old Testament History and Literature* attempts in his latest booklet, which is a continuation of this former work, a review of Jewish history and literature during the interval of over 125 years that intervened between the death of Simon in 135 B.C.E. and the birth of Jesus of Nazareth which he places in the year 8 B.C.E. The book shows no original research and as a popular work its only claim to favourable attention lies perhaps in the emphasis which its author laid on the literary development of the period. Dividing his book almost equally between history and literature, Mr. Alford gives a compact summary of the Book of Jubilees, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Tobit and Judith, parts of the Book of Enoch, Psalms of Solomon, Wisdom of Solomon, and ends the volume with

citations from Luke referring to the 'Magnificat' of Mary, the 'Benedictus' of Zacharias, and the 'Nunc Dimittis' of Simeon. Professor Schechter's *Fragments of a Zadokite Work* is strangely overlooked in silence.

The good faith in which Mr. Alford accepts theories about the composition, dates, and divisions of the apocryphal works would be amusing, if there were no danger of their misleading the unguarded reader. Of course, there is hardly a book in the Apocrypha regarding which any unanimity of opinion has been reached on these points. Not only are the usual theories mere conjectures based on internal evidence, but the very origin and language of the original are often unknown. Nevertheless, Mr. Alford shows no hesitation in an historical sketch to follow Charles's literary divisions and hypotheses, as though they were indubitably proved by reliable canons of historical criticism.

The author is not much happier in his historic delineations. It is an unwarranted exaggeration of Josephus' description of Hyrcanus to claim for the latter the capitalized title of 'Prophet, Priest, and King', and to depict him as 'the Jewish Messiah'. The familiar but erroneous description of the Sadducees as standing for the union of Church and State with its implied conception of the Pharisees is reproduced here without any qualification. Untenable is also the statement of the author that 'the earliest approach of Hellenism to Palestine was from the side of Antioch'. At the time when the Jews first came into serious cultural contact with the Seleucid dynasty the Septuagint was an accomplished fact.

For broader reasons of justice and from a truer historical perspective, one may question the propriety and fairness of Christening such injunctions in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs as, 'Love one another, and with long-suffering hide ye one another's faults Have compassion toward all, not toward men only, but also toward beasts'.

Die Juden in Worms. Ein Vortrag gehalten von BENAS LEVY im Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur. Berlin: M. POPPELAUER, 1914. pp. 20.

This small pamphlet reproduces with fine touches of local colour a fleeting bird's-eye view of the history of one of the most ancient and honoured Jewish communities in Germany. The interweaving of legends and history lends charm to the picture. The pathos of the story may well stir one to emotion and eloquence.

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